as well as domestic markets to arrest the decline in exports and also to increase domestic consumption etc. The government has also decided to set up a Price Stabilisation Fund with a corpus of Rs. 500 crores to provide relief to the growers of coffee, tea, natural rubber and tobacco.

Cement production

1108. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the total quantity of cement produced in the country during the last three years, year-wise;

(b) the targets fixed for cement production for the next three years;

(c) the incentives industry is offering to housing sector to augment construction of houses in the coming years; and

(d) the other details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYA SAGAR RAO): (a) The total quantity of cement produced in the country during the last three years is given below:—

Year	Production (In Million tonnes)
1999-2000	94.21
2000-01	93.61
2001-02	102.40
2002-03 (Upto January)	91.15

(b) As per Report of Working Group on Cement Industry for X Five Year Plan, production of cement for the next three years has been estimated as follows:—

Year	Production (Estimated) (In Million tonnes)
2003-04	124.38
2004-05	136.70
2005-06	150.47

(c) and (d) The industry is not providing any incentives for augmenting the construction of houses. Cement is sold by it at a common price irrespective of its use. However, the Government of India is providing incentives for promoting construction of houses in the country by providing housing loans at lower interest rates and through other fiscal incentives.

Trade agreement with South Africa

1109 SHRI C.P. THIRUNAVUKKARASU: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to sign full-fledged free trade agreement with South Africa;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the country has free trade agreement with any other Countries at present;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the impact of these agreements on the bilateral trade with those Countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY): (a) and (b) A joint Working Group has been set up to examine the proposal for a bilateral Preferential Trade Arrangement (PTA) and to prepare a draft Framework Treaty for this purpose between India and the South African Customs Union (SACU) which includes Lesotho, Botswana, Swaziland, Namibia and South Africa.

(c) and (d) A Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between India and Sri Lanka was signed on 28th December, 1998 in New Delhi. The FTA has been made operative by the issuance of Customs Notification on 1st March, 2000. The Agreement envisages phasing out of tariffs on all product, over a period of time, except for a limited number of items in the Negative List. While India would complete the process of tariff elimination over a period of 3 years, Sri Lanka would achieve this over 8 years.

(e) Such Free Trade Agreements are expected to enhance the bilateral trade and investment flows between the countries by providing better market access resulting from the exchange of tariff concessions. Since